



Commonwealth of Kentucky Public Protection Cabinet

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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More Sophisticated Illegal Gambling Machines are Being Found in Kentucky *Machines promoted as 'entertainment' but are still illegal*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 5, 2014) Various types of illegal gambling machines – like slot machines and video poker machines – have been common in Kentucky for years, and law enforcement officials are often faced with the task of investigating and prosecuting the operation of these machines. However, there is a growing trend in the United States that has reached parts of Kentucky, where a version of the illegal slot machines is being operated under the guise of entertainment. The operators of these machines want law enforcement and the public to believe they are legitimate games because they appear to be a game for young adults.

The growing prevalence of these machines has prompted investigators from the Kentucky Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) to seek additional training in order to aid other state and local law enforcement officials in recognizing and prosecuting those that operate these machines. The ABC enforcement investigators recently attended a training seminar that division director Mike Razor said will benefit law abiding citizens and residents of Kentucky.

"Besides violating state and federal laws, these illegal gambling machine operators are cheating their customers," according to Razor. "The machines are able to be programmed by the operator to alter the winning or "pay-out" percentage, meaning there is zero skill involved at winning."

The machine has to maintain the pay-out percentage that is chosen by the operator. In legal casinos in other states, regulators make sure that their machines are programmed above the minimum pay-out percentage set by state law.

Illegal gambling is described in Kentucky Revised Statutes as a risk of something of monetary value (usually money) by a participant in a game or activity that has an element of chance, meaning a participant cannot control the outcome solely by their skill level, in order to win a prize that is something of monetary value (usually money). Promoting Gambling 1st Degree is a Class D felony in Kentucky, punishable from one to five years in prison. Possession of a Gambling Device is a Class A misdemeanor in Kentucky, punishable of up to 12 months in jail.

ABC Investigators are tasked with enforcing all of the laws of the Commonwealth, with a primary focus on the alcohol related laws as they pertain to businesses that hold ABC licenses.

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